STRICTURES

UPON

NAVAL DEPARTMENTS,

&c. &c. &c.

WITH A

RECOMMENDATION

TO ABOLISH THE

COPPERING OF SHIPS' BOTTOMS

IN THE STATE OF ORDINARY;

AND TO DISCONTINUE THE

CAULKING OF THE KING'S SHIPS

WITH ROTTEN, WATER-SOAKEN OAKUM, &c. &c. &c.

ALSO A

PROPOSITION

TO APPROPRIATE THE

ROYAL ACADEMY

IN PORTSMOUTH DOCK-YARD,

INSTEAD OF BUILDING THE

INTENDED EXPENSIVE MAGNIFICENT

DWELLING HOUSE,

FOR THE RESIDENCE OF THE

RESIDENT COMMISSIONER

BY A SAILOR.

LONDON:

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M.DCC.LXXXV.

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MODERN HISTORY

STRICTURES, &c.

THE Addreſs to the late Lords Commiſſioners of the Admiralty, upon the degenerated, diſſatisfied ſtate of the Britiſh navy, &c. &c*. having met with general approbation, and a very pleaſing reception from the moſt accompliſhed, experienced ſea officers in His Majeſty's navy — And conceiving that a farther inveſtigation of the irregularities and miſmanagements, which yet remain to be taken up by the ſpirited

* Printed for John Stockdale, Piccadilly.

hand of reformation, would prove highly ſatisfactory to thoſe perſons who have honoured the Addreſs with their particular attention; and flattering myſelf, that thoſe Strictures will prove equally intereſting, and ſatisfactory to the public, and to official men in general, I ſhall, under ſuch a conſideration, endeavour to proceed upon that clear and impartial ground, ſo viſibly diſplayed in the Addreſs; and which, I truſt, will effectually ſerve as a ſubſtantial baſis, whereon to reſt my pretenſions and inclinations, to enter into a candid diſcuſſion of all thoſe irregularities and miſmanagements, under various appointments in the naval departments, which appear to require attention and reformation. Upon this preſumption, I hope, not only to merit public approbation, but alſo that my zealous attempts to ſupport the honour, dignity, and welfare of His Majeſty's ſervice, exhibited

hibited with becoming temper, humility, and impartiality, will find protection and ſupport, in the impartial and liberal minds of official men.

When I addreſſed their Lordſhips upon the degenerated, diſſatisfied ſtate of the Britiſh navy, &c. &c. I was perfectly aware, that my *ſubordinate* ſituation and want of rank in the ſervice, would not intitle me to proper attention, however *ſecretly* they might have been diſpoſed to adopt the remedies propoſed in the Addreſs, to effect the various modes of reformation therein ſuggeſted. Rank and conſequence, even without abilities, are, in theſe times, eſſential to ſupport a claim to attention; eſpecially, when the conduct of official men, and a reformation in exalted ſtations and their dependencies become the ſubject of diſcuſſion.

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The ſudden departure of their Lordſhips from the late Board, to whom the Addreſs was directed, would not admit of any genuine information to tranſpire, how it operated with their Lordſhips, either as a collective body, or as individuals in office. The Addreſs, therefore, under the denomination of a *profeſſional* publication, loſt its intended effect, though it had the good fortune to meet the approbation of the Public.

I hope the preſent Board will not be in the ſame predicament, and therefore flatter myſelf their Lordſhips will condeſcend to pay ſome attention to the diſintereſted labours of a man, zealous in the cauſe of reformation, œconomy, the honour of His Majeſty's crown, and the welfare of his country.

The

The circumſtance, of attending to the preferment of old, deſerving, and experienced officers, hath already undergone a candid conſideration, by the preſent illuſtrious Firſt Lord of the Admiralty; his Lordſhip's diſapprobation, of confirming very young men, who have been made officers, from the age of fourteen to twenty, hath alſo been manifeſted in his ſpirited determination to ſuppreſs all ſuch irregular appointments, which have ſo abundantly created jealouſies, animoſities, and diſſentions among our navy officers, and ſpread univerſal murmurs through the kingdom, and I fear the preſent age will not recover from their pernicious effects; though we entertain the moſt flattering hopes, that his Lordſhip's accompliſhed abilities, and unwearied endeavours to reform the navy, will, in a great meaſure, reſtore us to our

priſtine

priſtine glory, of manly appearance and formidable exertions.

An *impartial* inſpection into the *true* ſtate and condition of the line of battle ſhips, ſeems not to have been *generally* attended to. How deceitful are appearances! they are not to be depended upon, either in public or private ſituations. The elegant appearance of our men of war catch the eye of uninformed men, and apparently exhibit a fair outſide at their moorings in the reſpective harbours, where they are laid up in ordinary. They make a ſplendid diſplay of ſpreading awnings over their rotten decks, bright ſides, and painted weather works, &c. like the falſe and alluring elegance of a modern proſtitute, who, upon a *cloſe* examination into her *interior* matters, proves full of dangerous calamities, abounding with rottenneſs in her frame, and a worn-

worn-down conſtitution. Such may be deemed the *real* ſtate of our navy in general—What avails the high-varniſhed bright ſide, or elegantly-painted ſtern, when ſurrounded with mountains of ſeas, in an ocean where no relief can be obtained? Then comes the awful reflection of broken beams, rotten timbers, and leaky ſeams, all ſhut up, and confined under the *maſk* of *ſuperficial* repairs, *uſeleſs* ornaments, and copper bottoms.

This ſuggeſtion leads me to the ſerious conſideration of copper bottoms.

From the moſt ſenſible and experienced information, it hath been obſerved, that the coppering of ſhips, is become ſo pernicious in its conſequences, that nothing but a total ſuppreſſion of ſo ruinous an application

can poſſibly reſtore the navy to its original ſtrength and ſafety; at leaſt the ſtripping *every ſhip* of its copper, in the ſtate of ordinary, *ought* to be put into *immediate* execution, in order to effect a ſpeedy examination into the ſtate and condition of the moſt material and ſubſtantial parts of our men of war which lie wholly under water.

The coppering of ſhips was deemed indiſpenſably neceſſary, during the late war, to put us upon a footing with our enemies, in point of expeditious ſailing, and to prevent the inconvenient repetitions of docking ſhips, which enabled our fleets and cruizers to keep their ſtations to a more extended time, than the old mode of cleaning and refitting them could poſſibly admit of.

But

But the active and preſſing exigencies of war are not now in practice, nor even in meditation; therefore the ſtripping *all* our ſhips of copper would, indiſputably, add abundantly to the preſervation of their bottoms; and every ſhip, in the ſtate of ordinary, might be put into ſuch a reſpectable condition, as would admit of their being coppered immediately upon the commencement of a war, if coppering ſhould again be deemed neceſſary, upon the ſame principle that introduced it in the late war; and a line of battle ſhip might be coppered in three days under ſpirited exertions.

The late introduction of bolts, made of a compoſition that effectually prevents the copper from corroding, (which ſo viſibly deſtroyed the iron bolts) was an ingenious invention; they infallibly ſecure the wooden ends of the planks in ſhips bottoms,

which, from the effect that copper had upon iron bolts, became an alarming conſideration, becauſe the wodden ends of the planks, which are ſecured by bolts to the timbers, or frame of a ſhip, are the moſt material parts to be depended upon to prevent foundering at ſea; for, ſhould the wooden end of a plank ſtart from the bolts under water, a ſhip, in ſuch a perilous ſituation, would find it extremely difficult to be relieved from the horrid fate of ſhipwreck: and I believe the introduction of new-conſtructed bolts, has not been *generally* applied to the King's ſhips, which makes it the more an *immediate* duty, in our official men in the naval department, to cauſe the bottoms of thoſe ſhips, which are not yet relieved from the iron bolts, to be taken in hand without a moment's delay; otherwiſe, the copper operating upon the iron bolts, will certainly

tainly produce all thoſe dangerous effects which have already been ſuggeſted upon ſhips, whoſe wooden ends are faſtened with iron bolts to the frame, and whoſe bottoms are now ſhut up with copper.

From the intimation lately ſuggeſted upon the ſubject of relieving ſhips whoſe bottoms are faſtened with iron bolts, they have begun to take into dock the *beſt-contioned* men of war, for the purpoſe of driving out all the iron bolts, and of replacing them with compoſition bolts, which is certainly a very judicious undertaking; but as it will require ſix companies of ſhipwrights ſix weeks, at leaſt, to ſhift all the bolts of *one* line of battle ſhip, without performing any other work, the deplorable condition of thoſe ſhips which require *middling* and *two-third* repairs, (and *two-thirds* of the navy are in that periſhing ſtate) will,

will, of courſe, in a few years, bring them into ſuch a ſituation, that they will eventually become rotten and totally unfit even to undergo a *thorough* repair; and I am ſure, to enable government to replace the *periſhable* and *irrepairable* men of war with new ſhips, would require *infinite* time, and *continual extraordinary* ſupplies of money to accompliſh.

Upon a particular examination into ſome ſhips bottoms, ſince the late war, it has been found, (moſt viſibly about the *garboard ſtreak* and *bends*) that the oakum in the ſeams was entirely annihilated, nothing but the act of divine Providence could have brought them ſafe to port; which authenticated circumſtances, evidently corroborate every idea ſuggeſted in the addreſs to the Admiralty touching the abominable practice of caulking the King's ſhips

with

with *rotten, water-ſoken,* ſtuff, inſtead of *new* manufactured oakum, propoſed to the Navy Board by a gentleman of great experience, for the more effectually caulking His Majeſty's ſhips; and here I beg leave to make an extract from the journal of Captain Cook's laſt voyage to the ſouthern hemiſphere, in order to confirm the idea already ſuggeſted upon the pernicious, obſtinate mode of caulking the King's ſhips with rotten water-ſoaken oakum. Captain Cook, when at Prince William ſound, in the north weſt continent of America, finding his ſhip leaky, took the opportunity, while at anchor in Snug Corner Cove, to give her a heel, and the following is an extract from the journal: "Early the next "morning we gave the ſhip a good heel to "port, in order to come at, and ſtop the leak. "On ripping off the ſheathing, it was "found to be in the *ſeams,* which were

"very

" very open, both in and under the wale;
" *and in ſeveral places not a bit of oakum*
" *in them.*"

From the immediate and frequent demands for ſhips during the late war, upon every ſtation, it became the duty of government to equip them with the moſt poſſible expedition; and from the ſeverity of repeated trying ſervices, as well as the length of time which required them to be upon their reſpective ſtations, it did not occur to official men in general, the fatal conſequences that would eventually ariſe from ſhutting up ſhips' bottoms with copper, for ſuch long periods of time as ſome of them were obliged to undergo; and, indeed, it did not ſtrike home upon men's minds, until a *general* aſtoniſhment aroſe, upon the loſs of ſo many capital ſhips, which could not be properly accounted for,

until

until the *univerſal* alarm took place reſpecting copper bottoms.

Notwithſtanding the moſt ingenious attention hath been applied to render the coppering of ſhips' bottoms perfectly ſecure, yet one material circumſtance occurs, and which appears not to have been *generally* attended to; that is, a *timely* inſpection into the ſeams under water, before the application of copper becomes neceſſary.

After having expatiated upon theſe very ſerious matters ſo extremely alarming to the nation in general, and to ſeamen in particular, I truſt it will not be improper to urge the propriety, and indeed the neceſſity, of ſtripping the copper from *every* ſhip's bottom, and to recommend the preparing them as expeditioſly as the poſſibility of leading them into dock will ad-

mit of, for the purpoſe of undergoing an *impartial* examination into the *real* condition of their interior works; and thoſe ſhips which ſhall appear to require calking *only*, may ſoon be put into a compleat ſtate of ordinary, there to remain in conſtant readineſs for the reception of copper bottoms, whenever the exigency of ſervice ſhall require them to be put into commiſſion.

The univerſal cry againſt copper bottoms, and particularly while ſhips are lying in the inactive ſtate of ordinary, cannot admit of a doubt as to the propriety of ſtripping them immediately, and of introducing the old mode of caulking ſeams and paying bottoms, *triennially*, which would undoubtedly keep them in perfect readineſs to be fitted out upon any occaſion that ſhould abſolutely require their immediate appearance at ſea.

In order to elucidate the propoſition for aboliſhing the coppering of ſhips in the ſtate of ordinary, I ſhall make one remark, which I conceive will ſo effectually operate upon the mind of every experienced ſea officer, that I have not a doubt but they will very readily acquieſce in the propoſition to aboliſh copper bottoms in the ſtate of ordinary. Suppoſe the beſt-conditioned ſhip—for inſtance, the Warrior, of ſeventy-four guns, in Portſmouth harbour, with a complete copper bottom, ſhould remain three years in the ſtate of ordinary, and be ordered to fit out with all expedition for the Eaſt or Weſt Indies.

Query — What commander would be raſh enough to take upon him the command of that ſhip, after having been three years in ordinary, without her being taken into dock, to be ſtripped of the copper, and

thoroughly caulked? — To ſuppoſe that ſuch a ſhip ſhould proceed to the Eaſt or Weſt Indies, after her bottom had been ſhut up with copper three or four years, would be extreme folly and madneſs; indeed it would not be ſafe to ſend her a channel cruize for three months, eſpecially while they continue to caulk the King's ſhips with rotten, water-ſoaken oakum, which has inconteſtibly been proved to be made of ſuch periſhable ſtuff, that it will deſtroy itſelf, and become totally annihilated, in the courſe of a few years, even when ſhips are in an inactive ſtate: therefore the beſt-conditioned capital ſhip, which ſhall be ordered to ſea, after her bottom has been ſhut up three or four years with copper, would inevitably become a ſieve, and only ſerve as a coffin to bury the carcaſſes of ſix or ſeven hundred of His Majeſty's beſt

ſubjects in ſome heavy gale of wind in the ocean.

I wiſh to inforce the circumſtance of diſcontinuing copper bottoms, under every conſideration of diſapprobation. The general obſervation and conviction upon the pernicious effects which have recently been authenticated, from the long continuance of copper upon ſhips' bottoms, lead to the inconteſtible proof of the ſource of thoſe manifold evils which are too melancholy even to ſuggeſt; and although I am ſanctioned through the public voice, and ſupported by private, official, reſpectable opinions, to explode the abominable practice of coppering ſhips' bottoms, (though abſolutely neceſſary in time of war, to enable our ſhips to keep pace with the manœuvres of our enemies) yet I, as an obſcure individual, do not feel myſelf of ſo much

impor-

importance, to conceive that any recommendation of mine upon this intereſting ſubject, can in the leaſt, operate to promote its being carried into immediate execution. But it is very ſincerely to be hoped, that ſome ſpirited perſons of rank and abilities, will ſpeedily take up theſe ſerious matters, which have been ſo clearly ſuggeſted, upon the decline of our navy. The animated and impartial information already exhibited upon this ſubject, will infallibly lead to a proper inveſtigation of its great importance; and although our great men at preſent, are involved in too much party conteſt and partial attention to political matters, in order to eſtabliſh ſome points neceſſary to the well-being of the conſtitution, yet the navy, conſidered as our moſt natural and formidable ſupport in times of danger, *ought* to be the firſt of all important conſiderations, which ſhould engage

the

the attention of official men; for we know not how ſoon we may be called forth to battle, to oppoſe and defeat the evil deſigns of our jealous, inveterate enemies, who are putting their navy upon the moſt reſpectable footing, under all the ſpirited and expenſive exertions, that Miniſters and workmen can poſſibly effect.

Although ſome of our reſpectable experienced ſea officers, have attempted to bring forward the important conſideration of putting our navy into a *ſound* ſtate and condition; yet it remains a matter to be inforced, under every diſadvantage of œconomical reformation.

Let œconomy be *the watch word* of the day among Miniſters! and let our military eſtabliſhments be reduced accordingly: but let not the means whereby we, at a future

period,

period, are to ſupport the empire in all its riches, honour and glory, degenerate into an *uſeleſs*, *rotten* ſupport of the conſtitution. Such ill-timed œconomy would aſſuredly create abundant diſſatisfaction and diſſention among ourſelves, and render us completely contemptible among our enemies. I am ſure no man who poſſeſſes the ſterling ſpirit of a Briton, will murmur at any *extraordinary* ſupplies which ſhall be granted to put the navy upon a reſpectable footing; every official, well-informed man will juſtify the voting an *additional* ſupply of money, to be applied towards completing a proportionable number of capital ſhips, to be in readineſs for ſea as ſoon as the poſſibility of the moſt powerful exertions can effect it, which, under every circumſtance of a country liable to a ſea war, at a very ſhort notice, ſhould undoubtedly be put into immediate execution,

execution, to meet the probability of ſuch an event.

What a deplorable ſituation would our navy have been in, had the war continued even twelve months longer, from the fatal conſequences that would have infallibly ariſen upon the operation of copper on ſhips bottoms, whoſe wooden ends were all faſtened with iron bolts, and the ſeams caulked with rotten water-ſoaken oakum? Upon the protraction of the war another year, the principal part of our line of battle ſhips would conſequently have been employed in the Weſt Indies, where there are no docks to receive them, for the neceſſary purpoſe of examining into the ſtate and condition of their bottoms; and probably from the extraordinary demands there would have been for large ſhips, upon foreign ſtations, where the inevitable preſſing exigen-

cies of defenſive ſervices would have required their conſtant appearance, it would not have been poſſible, even to have admitted the worſt-conditioned men of war, to have undergone the leaſt examination, reſpecting their complaining and diſtreſſing condition; and although our navy at the commencement of the peace, appeared to be in a reſpectable ſtate, yet had the capital ſhips been employed another campaign in the Weſt Indies, bound up with copper bottoms, and caulked with rotten, water-ſoaken oakum, I conceive, under theſe alarming circumſtances, we ſhould have received the moſt fatal accounts of ſhips being loſt and foundered at ſea, and which would have been aſcribed wholly to their bottoms having been ſhut up with copper, beyond a reaſonable time of ſervice: and it is not to be doubted but that many of the capital ſhips would have ſhared the fate of the Centaur and Ramillies,

lies, upon a general order for the fleet to return to England, after having ſerved another campaign in the Weſt Indies: ſo that probably one half of our navy would have been left behind in the Atlantic ocean, inſtead of being ſafely moored in the harbours of England; which, circumſtanced as they were, at the concluſion of the war, it was with the utmoſt difficulty, they were enabled to reach the Britiſh Channel; and under the complicated diſtreſſing evils of crippled maſts, rotten frames, and leaky bottoms, caulked with rotten water-ſoaken oakum, and ſhut up with copper.

The making peace, therefore, under theſe very eſſential conſiderations alone, ought, in the eſtimation of ſenſible, impartial men, to be deemed perfectly juſtifiable, in that great and experienced miniſter, the Earl of Shelburne, whoſe conſummate abilities, enabled

him to effect ſo neceſſary and timely an event, to the everlaſting honour of his adminiſtration, and the future welfare of Great Britain.

It has ever been an eſtabliſhed maxim, among the moſt powerful and ſucceſsful nations, to make peace with ſword in hand; and if we had not availed ourſelves of ſuch a propitious ſeaſon, when our navy was deemed reſpectable, the event of another campaign might have reduced us to a defeated ſuppliant ſtate, overwhelmed with a powerful combination of numerous enemies, who, perhaps, might have prevailed ſo effectually over Great Britain, as to have dictated, in the fulleſt extent, the terms and conditions of every article of peace.

How happy, then, ought we to feel ourſelves, under the advantageous conditions ſtipulated in the articles of the late peace,

which nothing but the moſt experienced and improved abilities could have effected; and at a time when the nation was manifeſtly depreſſed with an enormous debt, and ſurrounded with numerous hoſts of increaſing enemies, in every quarter of the world.

Notwithſtanding the aboliſhing of copper bottoms may be adopted in time of profound peace, for the purpoſe of putting our ſhips into a *ſound* ſtate of ordinary; yet there are other matters, upon which the ſecurity and reſpectability of the navy very materially depend.

In every department under Government, it is eſſential to the well-being of the country, that *ſenſible, experienced, well-informed* men, ſhould be appointed to the moſt active, reſponſible employments, in order to enforce and recommend to Parliament, every

rea-

reaſonable and neceſſary ſupply, which ought to be granted for the honour, dignity, and ſupport of the nation. I will not preſume to declare, that *all* the *active* departments under Government, are filled with *ſenſible, experienced, well-informed* men; to offer a poſitive opinion upon ſuch matters, would be extreme arrogance, in one, who has nothing but a ſmall portion of merit, and a ſeries of faithful ſervices to ſupport his preſumption.

The going to Parliament with a mind full of *genuine* information, *ſterling* integrity, and *ſound* abilities, will ever intitle men, under theſe deſcriptions, to be heard with attention — They can boldly aſk for ſupplies, to forward the neceſſary operations of their reſpective departments; ſuch men ſeldom fail to increaſe the reſpectability of their ſtations; and though the public may

be

be diſſatisfied, in ſome inſtances, where money appears to be improperly granted, yet, we are bound to depend upon the unalterable, controlling power of Parliament, to decide ultimately upon all matters concerning the expenditure of public money.

It has been urged by ſome reſpectable, profeſſional men, that the vaſt ſums of money which have been expended upon our fortifications would have contributed more to the *real* ſecurity and benefit of the nation, had thoſe ſums been appropriated to the building and repairs of the navy.

I believe it hath been uſual for men in exalted ſtations to plead powerfully, and indeed feel abundantly for their ſeveral ſituations as public officers, and even to ſacrifice every other conſideration, to promote the

the executive arrangements of their own particular departments.

His Grace of R--- whoſe conſummate abilities, intitle him to all the honour and reſpect, His Majeſty, and the nation can poſſibly beſtow upon him, poſſeſſes the moſt ſubſtantial œconomical abilities of any man under Government, and no one appears to be more capable of cleanſing the *Augean* ſtable. All his arrangements, improvements, and reformations, through the extenſive department of the Ordnance, are evidently founded upon ſuch œconomical, ſenſible, and ſpirited plans, that to ſay no more of them, they are perfectly arranged, and inimitably conducted.

But there are opinions that will contraſt themſelves againſt the ſenſible and powerful exertions of his Grace. There are many,

who

who ſay, that to promote the very expenſive and uſeleſs conſtructions of fortifications, in Great Britain, is falſe and deluſive policy.

Although his Grace ſhould be allowed great merit, in raiſing fortifications to defend the country againſt an army of an enemy, yet it may be ſuggeſted, that he would acquire more real and univerſal approbation, were he to devote himſelf, and be aſſiſting, in the more conſequential buſineſs of putting the navy into ſuch a reſpectable ſtate, as would enable us to defeat the fleets of our combined enemies, which, probably, a few years may compel us to meet again, *in all the pride, pomp, and circumſtance of dreadful war* — and if we ſhould be caught in the ſame unfortunate ſituation, that ſtamped our ſhame, and leſſened the envied glory of Great Britain, at the beginning of the late war,

with an inferior fleet, our *ſuperb* fortifications will avail but little, towards preventing the army of an enemy landing in various acceſſible parts of the kingdom; and the conſequence of an invaſion *unmoleſted* by a Britiſh fleet, I leave to the feelings of Britons to decide upon.

It cannot but be admitted, that the erecting fortifications about Portſmouth and Plymouth, is highly neceſſary. The infinite conſequence which theſe arſenals are to the nation, requires they ſhould be protected againſt *ſudden* attacks of our enemies — If the French can raiſe 50,000 ſeamen, in the courſe of a few weeks, under the eſtabliſhment of a naval regiſter, it might undoubtedly put this country into a very precarious ſituation; therefore, every neceſſary precaution ſhould be enforced, to prevent any *ſudden* attacks upon the dock yards,

yards, wherein our moſt capital reſources are contained, for the important purpoſe of fitting out the navy.

The fortifications about Portſmouth and Plymouth, under this conſideration, indiſputably become objects of real importance, and ſhould, moſt certainly be put into a formidable ſtate of defence. Though I cannot yet be convinced, that the conſtructing fortifications about theſe places, ſhould have a *priority* of attention, over that of putting our navy into a *ſound, reſpectable* condition.

Why cannot Great Britain eſtabliſh a regiſter of ſeamen, in order to defeat the *ſudden* attempts of our enemies? A regiſter hath already been ſuggeſted, in the Addreſs to the Admiralty; which I am confident

might be eſtabliſhed, upon a very comprehenſive, uſeful plan.

If our ſhips could be put into a proper ſtate for ſea ſervice, and the ſeamen collected in as ſhort a time as thoſe of France, we might then be enabled to defend our dock yards, againſt any *ſudden* attempts of our enemies, without the aſſiſtance of fortifications.

But if our ſhips are to be neglected, and no regiſter of ſeamen eſtabliſhed, I conceive the erecting fortifications round the dock yards, to be a wiſe, judicious, and neceſſary undertaking.

Every profeſſional man feels from inclination and duty to promote the line of ſervice, which ſtamps his profeſſion. His Grace was bred a ſoldier; he has contributed

buted abundantly to the improvement and reſpectability of his profeſſion; and merits to be applauded, for his ſteady attachment to every circumſtance of its aggrandizement.

The honourable gentleman, who ſits as third officer at the Board of Ordnance, is a profeſſional man, but in another line to that of his Grace. It afforded extreme ſatisfaction to many ſea officers, to hear the honourable gentleman had publicly declared, *he would not give up his profeſſion upon any conſideration whatever.* I applaud his high ſpirited, manly ſentiments, and rejoice at his immoveable determination, becauſe he is an accompliſhed ſeaman — He poſſeſſes a brilliancy and ſuperiority of genius, that will ſoon do infinite honour to the Britiſh ſenate, and he is perfectly eligible to any appointment Miniſters can beſtow upon him. He fills

fills the ſtation of ſurveyor-general, with becoming ſpirit, and elegant abilities: but I could wiſh to ſee this brilliant young man appear more *viſibly* attached and *devoted* to his profeſſion as a ſeaman. He hath already diſtinguiſhed himſelf in a very eminent degree, as a ſea officer, by one of the moſt intrepid manœuvres, that ever graced the honourable deeds of a gallant commander. His quitting the command of a ſeventy-four gun ſhip, to be ſeated at the board of ordnance, ſeems to be a little *adverſe* to his declaration, *that he would not give up his profeſſion upon any conſideration whatever.* Perhaps it might be deemed commendable in him to accept of the ſurveyor-generalſhip, not under any conſideration of pecuniary advantage, but to place himſelf in a ſituation, that would enable him to exhibit thoſe ſplendid and improved abilities, which he is ſo perfectly capable of

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diſplaying upon all occaſions; and which the dull inactive ſervice of a guardſhip could not in any manner admit of. Although I admire, in a very extended degree, the amiable character and elegant abilities of this honourable gentleman, yet I cannot approve of his *retiring* from the naval ſervice, to that of the ordnance, to promote and encourage every vote of ſupply that can poſſibly be obtained, for the purpoſe of erecting expenſive fortifications, in preference to the more beneficial *extraordinary* ſupplies, which *ought* to be granted for putting our navy upon an immediate reſpectable footing. If the honourable gentleman had been appointed to the Admiralty, inſtead of the Ordnance, I preſume he would have been of infinitely more uſe and conſequence to his country, than his preſent appointment will permit him. I am confident, the Board of Admiralty would have received a very able acqui-

acquiſition, from the ſenſible and ſpirited exertions of ſuch an accompliſhed officer.

The profeſſion of a ſeaman requires that a man ſhould be in conſtant habits of practical knowledge, to qualify him as a complete officer.

But a profeſſional noble Lord declared in the Houſe of Commons, that he would not take any navy officer who had ever ſerved upon the *ſmuggling* ſervice, to be an officer under him in the navy. The rank and conſequence of his Lordſhip may, in his own eſtimation, entitle him to broach any opinion, either upon profeſſional, or political ſubjects, in the Houſe of Commons; but I will not allow him to be a competent judge of naval merit, if he *preſume* to *proſcribe* men, who are in the *immediate* track of increaſing the *practical* knowledge of their

their profeſſion; ſuch an *illiberal* inſinuation might correſpond with his Lordſhip's *modern* refined ideas of ſeamanſhip; but his ſentiments are totally derogatory to the original, manly principles of a complete, thorough-bred ſeaman.

I will not pay even his Lordſhip ſo bad a compliment as to conceive, that were he to command a frigate, or any ſmaller veſſel, to protect the revenue from ſmuggling, that either his Lordſhip's manners and principles would become vitiated upon ſuch an active ſervice, or that his knowledge, as a practical ſeaman, would degenerate, or be diminiſhed. I believe, in the late peace, his Lordſhip had the honour to command a frigate upon the ſmuggling ſervice, though I conceive, from the appearance of his cabin, at that time, (it being crammed with ſtatutes, hiſtories, and other uſeful docu-

ments, to qualify a man for political life) his profeſſional abilities were not very conſpicuouſly improved upon the ſtation; indeed his ſentiments then muſt have been perfectly conſiſtent with his preſent ideas, that a man would diſqualify himſelf as a navy officer, who ſhould condeſcend to be employed upon the ſmuggling ſervice. I deny every poſition which his Lordſhip's profound erudition, or *ſuperficial* experience of ſeamanſhip, can enable him to advance upon this ſubject, and dare preſume to aſſert, that though it might be the fate of an officer to ſerve upon the ſmuggling ſervice, and admitting his abilities and education would not enable him to ſtudy politics, or that he may not be diſpoſed to *neglect* his *profeſſional* duty, to qualify himſelf, as an *orator*, to *figure away*, in party diſputation, in the Houſe of Commons, and to ſet himſelf up as the *paragon* of naval tactics, yet an officer

cer may have it in his power to acquire the practical and theoretical knowledge of a ſeaman, and thereby become a proper perſon to be employed in His Majeſty's navy, though, perhaps, not in ſuch a modern, *elegant*, high-finiſhed ſtyle as would recommend him to ſtrut upon the quarter deck of hisLordſhip's man of war, with the *graceful* airs and conſequence of a *right honourable* commander.

If we were to ſearch the navy liſt, there are many excellent characters to be found, who have ſerved upon the ſmuggling duty, and are now in high eſtimation as ſeamen and officers. I cannot admit that an officer's being employed in a King's ſhip, to act againſt ſmugglers, can in any degree operate to his prejudice as a ſeaman and officer, becauſe he hath manifeſtly been in proper habits of receiving practical

knowledge. To be ſure he cannot have acquired that *formal etiquette* of ſervice, ſo neceſſary to be kept up on board flag ſhips, in order to attain the *eſſence* of politeneſs and *reſpectful* ſubordination.

Peace being happily eſtabliſhed, the ſmuggling duty conſequently becomes the moſt active ſervice upon which our navy officers can be eſſentially employed both at home and abroad: therefore the doctrine ſuggeſted by the noble Lord to diſcourage officers in the navy, from exerciſing themſelves in the genuine practical profeſſion of a ſeaman, would infallibly prove fatal to the nation, were his erroneous ideas of ſervice to be adopted.

Perhaps his Lordſhip views the means of obtaining the profeſſion of a ſeaman, through the medium of claſſical conſtruction,

tion, heightened by ſophiſtical and metaphyſical powers of reaſoning and inſtruction.

Perhaps too his Lordſhip conceives, that a *long-laboured* ſpeech, *bellowed forth* in the Houſe of Commons, *againſt* a Miniſter *to-day*, and another *in his favour to-morrow*, will entitle him to be reſpected as the *champion* of naval merit and accompliſhments.

I once had the honour to have my teſtimonials laid before his Lordſhip, reſpecting my qualifications and pretentions to preferment, when he was a Lord of the Admiralty. Notwithſtanding I had paſſed a proper examination, touching my abilities as a ſeaman, and had been nearly *thirty* years in the naval ſervice, it was not deemed ſufficient to entitle me to preferment,

ment, becauſe I had not taken out my time at the Navy Office, as a rated mate or midſhipman for two years, which others had done while they were *children* at ſchool; and though I might have availed myſelf of ſuch an *indecent* privilege, I could not have the *aſſurance* to ſupport the impoſition, conceiving that my character and ſervices were ſufficiently eligible to obtain a commiſſion. His Lordſhip's opinion upon that matter, agreeable to his own letter to the late Sir William James, was as follows: "It is a fundamental rule, I be-
"lieve, never, in any inſtance, deviated
"from by the Admiralty, that no perſon
"can even be examined for a lieutenant,
"who has not been at leaſt two years
"rated. The rule appears to me ſo pro-
"per and reaſonable, and the ſmalleſt de-
"viation from it pregnant with ſo much
"miſchief to the ſervice, that I will
"fairly

" fairly own, that I would not attempt it,
" even was I not, as I am, convinced
" that it would be impoſſible to obtain
" ſuch a ſubverſion of a moſt eſſential re-
" gulation, to gratify any individual."

I ſhall take the liberty to make ſome remarks upon his Lordſhip's *very ſerious conſideration*, as to the impropriety of admitting me to the rank of lieutenant.

The article expreſſive of the conditions for making lieutenants runs thus: —
" That they have ſerved ſix years *at ſea*,
" and have been rated two of the ſaid ſix
" years as midſhipman or maſter's mate
" in ſome of His Majeſty's ſhips, and
" not under *twenty years* of age."

I would honour any man, were he to oppoſe the *ſubverſion* of ſo eſſential a regulation

lation in *every inſtance*; but there are too many inſtances wherein this article hath been moſt ſhamefully *ſubverted*, which hath led me to conceive, that the regulation pointed out by his Lordſhip is not *ſo eſſential* to the making officers, as he would wiſh to inſinuate. Although his Lordſhip ſet his face ſo *indignantly* againſt that *particular* part of the article, which requires a perſon to be rated *two years*, mate or midſhipman, in the inſtance of my application for preferment, yet I conceive, upon an impartial examination into the adminiſtration of the Admiralty, while he was at the Board, it will be found, that there were numberleſs *ſubverſions* of this article, *in general*, upon the making officers, particularly under the abominable admiſſion of *boys*, not twenty years of age, and ſome there were who had not even attained the age of fifteen: the being

rated

rated two years midſhipman, is too often only *nominal.* His Lordſhip *pretends* to have an *univerſal* knowledge of naval affairs; he therefore cannot but know, that being rated mate or midſhipman, has, of late, been obtained in a manner not to be juſtified. I will not ſay, poſitively, that his Lordſhip was made an officer, by *procuring* it contrary to the *true* meaning of the regulation, and thereby became *perſonally* acceſſary to the *ſubverſion* of the article: I leave the conſideration of that matter to his own feelings and reflection. It is not becauſe a perſon can produce a certificate of his having been rated mate or midſhipman *two years*, that the regulation is complied with *eſſentially*, it means, the perſon ſhould have been *really at ſea* during that time. His Lordſhip is well informed, how many officers there are now in the ſervice, who *nominally* ſerved as

mate or midſhipman, though they were at ſome public ſchool while they were ſo rated; and he is not unacquainted with the ſhameful mode of rating boys, in time of peace, upon the books of King's yachts, guardſhips, &c. where many of the parties never appear to anſwer for themſelves, even at a muſter.

And not twenty years of age, this is the moſt material condition upon which the admiſſion of a perſon to be an officer *ought* to depend: there are various exiſting inſtances to evince the *ſubverſion* of this *eſſential* part of the regulation. There are officers now in being, who were made Lieutenants under *fifteen* years of age; and I am confident his Lordſhip is not a ſtranger to *theſe* alarming *ſubverſions*, as they were countenanced when he had the honour to be the *oſtenſible* champion of the Admiralty upon all occaſions.

It

It has been urged, by official men, in excuſe for having ſigned commiſſions for Captains and Lieutenants, to *boys* under twenty years of age, that, *officially*, they knew nothing of perſons being under age, though at the inſtant they *proſtituted* their names to ſuch unwarrantable purpoſes, they felt a conſcious impulſe that they were doing wrong; and that the parties upon whom they had beſtowed their favours, were conſiderably under the age preſcribed by the general printed inſtructions.

If the article relative to the making officers had been *literally* and *impartially* enforced againſt all attempts to invade the regulation, and had the Admiralty reſiſted and forbid the irregular appointments of *boys* under *twenty* years of age, and not rejected *qualified* ſeamen who had been

at ſea twenty or thirty years, though not rated *two* years mate or midſhipman; under theſe circumſtances the navy would have been more reſpectable at this moment, and the unhappy diſſatisfaction which reigns ſo viſibly among our navy officers, would not have prevailed in ſo great a degree, from the *partial* appointments of very young men to the rank of Captains and Lieutenants: and whilſt the Admiralty continued to beſtow commiſſions upon *children* at home, the commanding officers upon their reſpective ſtations, were ſanctioned and encouraged, to promote their own children and thoſe of their friends abroad.

Feeling myſelf to have been exremely ill-treated upon the *partial* opinion which the noble Lord preſumed to offer, reſpecting my pretenſions to preferment, I hope

to

to be juſtified, under every idea of candour, impartiality and warrantable retaliation, when I declare, that notwithſtanding his Lordſhip's rank and conſequence have placed him beyond the contempt of an obſcure individual, I believe his abilities, as an officer, were never diſplayed, in ſo *eminent* a degree, as to entitle him, in *reality*, to the ſmiles of his Sovereign, or to merit the approbation of the Public. He might have impoſed upon *one*, but he will never convince the *others* that he is poſſeſſed of the moſt ſound and conſiſtent principles.

During the late war, his Lordſhip commanded a ſeventy-four gun ſhip; at the ſame time he was but a young Captain, and held a ſeat at the Admiralty Board. His feelings (though they are not of the moſt delicate nature) could not tell him the

the public approved of ſuch *partial* appointments. His being a Commiſſioner of the Admiralty, and *officially* giving orders to a Commander in Chief of the fleet under whom he ſerved as a junior Captain, was a circumſtance truly abſurd and incompatible with the ſpirit of military ſervice, and a ſcandalous *ſubverſion* of that *eſſential* delicacy of command, which ſhould invariably be ſupported in a military line, as it tended to deſtroy the very eſſence of naval ambition. His Lordſhip was not contented to hold two appointments, ſo incompatible with each other, but the nation was *obliged* to find him a *journeyman* Captain to command his ſhip, when his *private affairs*, or the *more conſequential* duty of the Houſe of Commons, required his preſence. I ſhould be glad to aſk his Lordſhip, under what *eſſential regulation* he arranged this *very neceſſary* and *conſiſtent innovation?* Becauſe,

cauſe, at that time, there were many old and reſpectable Captains ſoliciting for employment, and who would have been happy in the appointment of a ſeventy-four gun ſhip; but *they* had not ſufficient intereſt to obtain a command, whilſt *his* Lordſhip's *tremendous* abilities and *powerful* influence, enabled him to keep the command of a ſeventy-four gun ſhip, as a nobleman would keep his *yacht*, ready for any ſervice he ſhould pleaſe to appoint, and to be kept at any port he ſhould think proper to direct. Perhaps his Lordſhip deems it the peculiar privilege of an Iriſh peer, to command a ſeventy-four gun ſhip, and at the ſame time hold a ſeat at the Admiralty Board. But is not this (to uſe his Lordſhip's own particular words) "*ſubverting a moſt eſſential regulation to* "*gratify an individual?*" His Lordſhip's *inconſiſtent* manners and conduct have been

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ſo conſpicuouſly manifeſted in various inſtances, that any endeavour to illuſtrate his *excellent* character, would only ſerve to confound thoſe *doubtful* opinions that have been looking for the integrity of his heart, and perhaps might be the means of throwing a more *diſmal* ſhade upon the *ſable* complection of his Lordſhip's *conſiſtent* abilities, which he has apparently the addreſs to exhibit, with ſo much *humility*, *delicacy*, and *ſelf-denial*, upon all occaſions.

I have already, in my addreſs to the Admiralty, ſpoken of the brilliant ſervices, which marked the ſplendid conduct of our moſt conſpicuous naval heroes, during the late war; and though the manly ſpirit and ſteady diſcipline of the navy, have viſibly declined ever ſince the auſpicious æra of 1762, yet, I confeſs, there are many characters in the ſervice, who merit the greateſt commendations as officers, and

whoſe

whoſe accompliſhed abilities, are perfectly capable of reſtoring the navy to its former ſpirit and diſcipline; but I will not admit, that it can be *ſubſtantially* eſtabliſhed, until a *general* ſyſtem of reformation be effected; and that the *ſpecific* article, directing the mode of making officers be enforced, under the moſt impartial and determined regulation. *Twenty-one* years of age, *ought* to be the fixed ſtandard, to entile qualified perſons to commiſſions in the navy; none to be admitted officers under that age, upon any conſideration whatever, and to produce *genuine* teſtimonies of their *real* ſervices *at ſea*, for ſix years, two of which to be rated mate or midſhipman.

The very ſhameful abuſe of this article, calls loudly for immediate reformation; the whole nation are in aſtoniſhment at its *unbounded ſubverſion*; and unleſs the ſpi-

rited determination of our preſent illuſtrious firſt Lord of the Admiralty be ſupported, to prevent the increaſe of ſuch a deſtructive evil, our navy will become ſo wretchedly degenerated, that inſtead of the reſpectable, manly appearance, which ought to characterize the *true-born* ſons of Neptune, we ſhall poſſeſs nothing more than the modern finical manners and habits of macaronies.

At a time when the moſt ſerious attention and exertions are in agitation, to promote œconomy through every deparment of the State, a capital object preſents itſelf to public view, founded upon the moſt expenſive, imprudent, unneceſſary plan, that could poſſibly be ſuggeſted, to render every idea of œconomy ridiculous and ineffectual.

The *new dwelling houſe*, or rather *palace*, intended for the *reſident* Commiſſioner,

ſioner, in Portſmouth dock-yard, is the ſubject alluded to. The magnificent manner of *building*, *ornamenting*, and *finiſhing* this *lodging houſe*, excites the general attention and diſapprobation of every friend to œconomical reformation. From the extenſive and elegant plan now carrying into execution, (although the Houſe within itſelf be eſtimated at *no more* than twelve thouſand pounds) the *indirect*, or rather *inevitable* expence to government, upon an impartial calculation, will, in all probability, amount to the enormous ſum of thirty thouſand pounds, before the Commiſſioner will be enabled to take poſſeſſion of his *ſuperb* manſion, and ſhall have cleared away all the excreſcencies, impediments, and buildings, which obſtruct the view of his dwelling houſe, and which may be conſidered as nuiſances to his premiſes.

The *ſacred* chapel (which has lately undergone a very conſiderable repair) and where divine ſervice is performed every Sunday, and prayers twice a week, muſt be taken down. Storehouſes, workſhops, and offices of various denominations, which are, at preſent, deemed too near the houſe, muſt alſo be cleared away, ſo that the acquiſition of the ground upon which the Commiſſioners old houſe now ſtands, will very little more than compenſate for that, upon which the new one, with all its *neceſſary* arrangements, is to be erected; and in order to make this *lodging houſe* perfectly elegant, they have put government to the extraordinary expence of ſending to London for bricks at *five pounds* per thouſand, when bricks might be had in the neighbourhood of Portſmouth, equally uſeful, at twenty-four ſhillings per thouſand. To erect ſuch a *magnificent* houſe

for

for the temporary reſidence of a gentleman poſſeſſing only five hundred pounds per annum under government, hath ſo much the appearance of profuſe extravagance, ignorance, and diſregard to the public welfare, that nothing but contempt of national œconomy can plead in excuſe for thoſe who were the original directors of it; and it is generally underſtood, that the preſent firſt Lord of the Admiralty has expreſſed, in very high terms, his diſapprobation of this intended magnificent, expenſive, building. Although the preſent reſident Commiſſioner be a gentleman of the moſt liberal, amiable character, poſſeſſing every virtue and excellence, that can poſſibly adorn human nature, and that his private fortune be amply independent, yet I believe his wiſhes are not to be accommodated with ſuch a *magnificent* houſe; and had he been fully conſulted upon the

buſineſs

buſineſs, probably government would have felt the good effects of his diſcretion and prudence. I am ſure, though upon all occaſions, he treats his friends and viſitants in the hoſpitable, elegant ſtile of a thorough-bred gentlemen, yet he would have been contented to have entertained his gueſts, and accommodated his own family, in a much leſs *lodging houſe* than the preſent *ſuperb* manſion, which is now building for his reſidence.

Conſidering the manifeſt want of œconomy in thoſe perſons who propoſed the building of this expenſive houſe, as a breach of that duty which every man in a reſponſible appointment *ought* to maintain, for the good of the country, I am led to ſuggeſt, that in all caſes where ſpeculative minds are inclined to cenſure the conduct of official men, they ſhould infallibly propoſe

poſe effectual remedies againſt the evils ſuggeſted, in order to impreſs the minds of impartial perſons, ſo as to enable them to judge properly, upon the merits of any ſubject under diſcuſſion.

I do not feel myſelf under the leaſt embarraſſment or difficulty, in attempting to remedy the extravagant evil which I have pointed out.

If it was deemed really neceſſary, and perfectly convenient, to take down the Commiſſioner's old houſe in Portſmouth dock-yard, and appropriate the ſpot upon which the houſe and gardens ſtand, to more uſeful ſervices, and that another convenient habitation ſhould be found for the reſident Commiſſioner. Why not appropriate the *Royal Academy* in the dock-yard

to

to that purpoſe, which is now become a very uſeleſs, expenſive foundation to Government?

When our navy was in its infancy, and required every exertion to make it reſpectable, the Royal Academy at Portſmouth was deemed an eligible inſtitution, for the inſtruction of youth in the art of navigation, and where many of our brave and experienced ſea officers, laid the foundation of all their ſubſequent brilliant ſervices; but not in that proportion of numbers and excellence, which the public had a right to expect, from ſo great and expenſive an inſtitution.

Since the art of navigation hath been ſo univerſally known among our ſea officers, and, from experience, it has been eſtabliſhed, that one year at ſea qualifies a boy as

as a ſeaman and an artiſt, more than three years at the Royal Academy. The ſchool, under this impreſſion, has been ſo much depreciated and deſerted, that of late years very few ſcholars have been introduced; and it frequently happens, that there are no more than five or ſix boys at a time upon the foundation.

The expence to Government attending the Royal Academy, including officers' ſalaries and contingent charges, amounts to about two thouſand pounds per annum; a very extravagant ſum indeed for the education only of a few boys in the art of navigation, who might be better taught at a private academy for twenty pounds per annum each, or who would be abundantly better inſtructed on board the King's ſhips, in theoretical and practical knowledge of

ſeamanſhip, under the direction of naval ſchoolmaſters, appointed by Government for that purpoſe.

The houſe, under the deſcription of the Royal Academy, might have been converted into a convenient, comfortable habitation for the reſident Commiſſioner, at the moderate expence of one thouſand pounds; indeed this large and commodious building is rather too much for a man enjoying only five hundred pounds per annum. Half the houſe and premiſes would be ſufficient for the Commiſſioner; the other half could be eaſily made convenient for the reſidence of the *Port Admiral*; and as the nature of his duty requires that he ſhould have a fixed place of reſidence on ſhore, the ſouth wing and offices belonging to the Royal Academy would be a very eligible ſituation for the Admiral; the

the communication between him and the dock-yard officers, would thereby be rendered completely convenient, and they would then be immediately acceſſible to each other, to confer upon all points of duty, neceſſary to be diſcuſſed between them, for the good of His Majeſty's ſervice.

If the Commiſſioner had been fixed in that ſituation, it would have prevented the intended demolition of the chapel, ſtore-houſes, workſhops, offices, &c. which are to be taken down in conſequence of erecting the Commiſſioner's *new houſe*, and a very conſiderable ſpace of ground would have been ſaved thereby, which, in an arſenal, where ground is an invaluable object, would have contributed abundantly, to facilitate the execution of the new arrangements that are intended to be com-

pleated, in order to make Portſmouth the moſt convenient and reſpectable dock-yard in England.

The excellent idea of appropriating the Royal Academy to be a dwelling houſe, for the reſident Commiſſioner, has been approved of under every conſideration of convenience and œconomy, by all deſcriptions of ſenſible men: and how ſo much money can be permitted to be ſunk upon ſuch an expenſive building as the Commiſſioner's *new houſe* in a dock-yard, where ground is of ineſtimable value, and for a man with a ſalary of five hundred pounds per annum only, is a matter of aſtoniſhment! It is therefore to be hoped, that an *immediate* ſtop will be put to this moſt extravagant building, as it is not yet too late, to prevent the extenſive plan of this *lodging houſe*, from being raiſed into a

ſhame-

ſhameful appearance of *ſplendid magnificence!*

When a propoſition was agitated in the Houſe of Commons for purchaſing Sir Gregory-Page Turner's houſe upon Blackheath, for the royal cadets at Woolwich, for the ſum of twenty thouſand pounds, it met with ſo much oppoſition and diſapprobation, that it was deemed an unneceſſary, extravagant expence to Government. The cadets at Woolwich, who are intended for the ſervice of the royal artillery, (the moſt brilliant corps in Britain) have no other ſituation wherein they may be enabled to attain their profeſſion as artillery men, than the Warren at Woolwich, which, from the increaſe of cadets, and the additional improvements in the art of war, ſince its firſt inſtitution, is become conſiderably too ſmall for carrying on their prac-

practical manœuvres: whereas the young men intended for ſea officers, have the advantage of embarking on board the King's ſhips, to attain their profeſſion as ſeamen and artiſts, and the Royal Academy at Portſmouth is alſo appropriated for their education, at the *enormous* expence of two thouſand pounds per annum to Government, though it is now become totally uſeleſs and unneceſſary; while the Woolwich cadets are labouring under extreme difficulties, in not having a proper place to obtain their qualifications as artillery men, whoſe ſervices are eſteemed to be of the higheſt importance to the State.

Since the diſcerning eye of cenſure, hath directed its obſervation on the impropriety and extravagance of erecting a magnificent houſe, for the reſident Commiſſioner of Portſmouth dock-yard, it has been urged

as

as a *ſalvo*, in order to put a good face upon ſuch a flagrant act of needleſs expence, that the building is not intended merely for the reſidence of the Commiſſioner, but to provide a ſuite of rooms for the reception of His Majeſty, whenever he ſhall be diſpoſed to viſit his royal navy at Portſmouth. I believe no ſubject in Britain would have the leaſt objection to eſtabliſh the moſt convenient and reſpectable apartments for the reception of His Majeſty, and to provide every thing ſuitable to his rank and dignity, upon ſuch an occaſion, though the uncertainty of a viſitation from that great perſonage, would ſcarcely admit of making any expenſive proviſion for that purpoſe; and admitting it to be proper, under every conſideration of reſpect to the King, to have a convenient place eſtabliſhed for his accommodation, why not appropriate the ſouth wing

to

of the Royal Academy in Portſmouth dock-yard, and convert it into royal apartments for the reception of His Majeſty, or any part of the Royal Family, which might be effected at a very ſmall expence, and which would be abundantly more convenient and uſeful than any rooms in the Commiſſioner's new houſe, for the accommodation of the King, or any part of the Royal Family, whenever they ſhould think proper to viſit the dock-yard and navy at Portſmouth?

If I were to recapitulate every uſeful propoſition recommended in the Addreſs to the Admiralty, upon the degenerated, diſſatisfied State of the Navy, &c. it would ſwell this book rather beyond the limits of a common publication, eſpecially as I intend hereafter, to enter into a diſcuſſion of ſome other intereſting matters relative

lative to the navy. I ſhall therefore only touch upon one material point, which has not yet been properly attended to, and leave the other important ſuggeſtions, contained in the Addreſs, to find the way to official men as time and circumſtances ſhall direct.

The mode of employing our artificers in the King's dock-yards, excites at this time, the ſerious attention of all diſcerning, ſpeculative men; and although it may be the peculiar excellence of a very ſenſible, official man, who preſides at one of our public Boards, to work reformations in the ſeveral departments under his direction, for which he is entitled to abundant commendation and merit; yet I conceive, were he diſpoſed to be *a little more* liberal in his ideas, upon the neceſſary *concatination* of ſubordination, and could be

prevailed upon to promote the efficacious doctrine of *confidence*, amongſt the reſpective officers, over whoſe official conduct he has the honour to preſide, I am ſure he would not only conciliate the minds of numberleſs individuals, but the nation in general, would applaud him for his *becoming* condeſcenſion, in adopting ſuch ſalutary meaſures as would infallibly promote, in various inſtances, the ſpirit and welfare of His Majeſty's ſervice, through the extenſive eſtabliſhments of our reſpective dock-yards.

Two ſhillings and one penny per day to each artificer, under the deſcription of working ſhipwrights, whoſe ſervices are invaluable to this country, is a *pitiful pittance*, compared with other uſeful mechanical workmen, who, in private working ſituations, will earn from five to fifteen ſhillings

lings per day. It is really aſtoniſhing, how theſe working ſhipwrights can ſubmit to be *fettered* down to ſuch a *pittance*, when there are ſo many alluring avenues open, to lead them into more advantageous ſituations, and where they might be enabled to ſupport their families in comfort and decency. Indeed it is much to be lamented as a public grievance, that thoſe extraordinary uſeful men begin to look about them, and are directing their views and inclinations to America, Ruſſia, and other places, where encouragement and comfortable ſubſiſtence are to be found.

The emigration of great numbers of our moſt active and experienced ſhipwrights, as well as thoſe of our beſt ſeamen, I fear, hath lately occurred. Though men are naturally attached to their native country, it is not to be conceived they will

ſubmit to *ſtarve* at home, when opportunities offer to live comfortably and in affluence abroad.

Theſe ſuggeſtions bring me to the conſideration in what manner our artificers *ought* to be employed in the King's dock-yards: in order that government ſhould reap the moſt extended advantages from the labour and exertions of the artificers, it would be proper to employ them *generally*, upon *taſk work*; but not in the ſhamful *limited* manner they are engaged in ſummer time. On *taſk* or *jobb work*, which confines them to a *certain* ſmall ſum per day, not exceeding *ſeven pence*, more than they allow the *daily* workmen, who, whether they work or not, are paid for their day's work. If the men who work *taſk* or *jobb work*, could be permitted to exert themſelves, in a manner ſo as to enable

enable them to earn five or ſix ſhillings per day, government would feel the good effects of ſuch able exertions; and it would contribute abundantly, towards expediting the putting our ſhips into a proper ſtate of ordinary, upon which ſervice not a moment's delay ſhould be permitted. But the workmen who are employed upon *taſk* or *jobb work*, are *reſtricted* to *one day and two tides*; and though the expeditious manner of working *taſk* or *jobb work*, will allow them to complete their *allotted proportion of work*, perhaps in *half a day*, they are not permitted to leave their ſtations, until the other workmen, who work by *the day*, quit the dock yard. This cruel reſtriction, creates a ſpecies of idleneſs and inattention in the workmen, tending to promote licentiouſneſs, and gives a moſt ſhameful check to the voluntary

tary exertions of thoſe ſpirited, ingenious, artificers.

A regulation upon a liberal, extended plan, would not only put the artificers into poſſeſſion of more wages, which would enable them to ſupport their families in high comfort and becoming decency, but government would receive infinitely more advantages from the ſpirited exertions of the artificers; and admitting they would earn five ſhillings per day, when employed upon *taſk* or *jobb work*, the conſequence of ſuch increaſed wages would ſtimulate them to perform their duty with alacrity, and government would thereby engroſs the whole time and eſſential ſervices of thoſe uſeful men.

I am aware that arguments will be oppoſed to all theſe reaſonable ſuggeſtions: it

it will be ſaid, we do not want more ſervice from the ſhipwrights than what, at preſent, occupies their time; becauſe they perform as much work as we think neceſſary, to put the ſhips into good condition, and for the increaſe of the navy.

I will not preſume to ſport an opinion diametrically oppoſite to the ſentiments of *ſome* official men, nor will I have the arrogance to put my judgement in competition with them, upon theſe ſerious points of national concern; but I will venture to pronounce it to be the general opinion of all our moſt experienced officers, and profeſſional men, of every denomination, that the putting our navy into a *ſpeedy*, *reſpectable*, *ſound* ſituation, in order to guard againſt *ſudden* and *unexpected* events, requires abundantly more exertion, than the preſent mode of carrying on duty, in the

the reſpective dock yards, can poſſibly effect.

I ſhall now beg leave to conclude theſe ſtrictures upon naval departments, &c. &c. &c. with the flattering hopes, they will receive that general, public, candid attention and approbation, which ſo conſpicuouſly marked the Addreſs to the late Lords Commiſſioners of the Admiralty, upon the degenerated, diſſatisfied State of the Britiſh Navy, &c. &c. with the fulleſt commendations of the moſt accompliſhed, reſpectable, and experienced official men.

But it is to be lamented, that men in ſubordinate ſituations, though poſſeſſed of real knowledge and improved abilities, and who are capable of communicating information upon the moſt intereſting national matters; in preſuming to exhibit their opinions

nerally meet with diſcouraging and ſcornful treatment, inſtead of receiving that attention and decent enouragement, which ought to be adminiſtered to men, who, diſintereſtedly offer their aſſiſtance, in pointing out reformations and improvements to promote the public welfare.

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of

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